



General Assembly

January Session, 2017

***Raised Bill No. 7159***

LCO No. 4347



Referred to Committee on EDUCATION

Introduced by:  
(ED)

***AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S SEAL OF BILITERACY.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-5 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2017*):

3 (a) The Commissioner of Education shall, in accordance with this  
4 section, issue a state high school diploma to any person (1) who  
5 successfully completes an examination approved by the commissioner,  
6 or (2) who (A) is seventeen years of age and has been officially  
7 withdrawn from school in accordance with the provisions of section  
8 10-184 or is eighteen years of age or older, and (B) presents to the  
9 commissioner evidence demonstrating educational qualifications  
10 which the commissioner deems equivalent to those required for  
11 graduation from a public high school. Application for such a diploma  
12 shall be made in the manner and form prescribed by the commissioner  
13 provided, at the time of application to take the examination described  
14 in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the applicant is seventeen years of  
15 age or older, has been officially withdrawn from school, in accordance  
16 with section 10-184, for at least six months and has been advised, in

17 such manner as may be prescribed by the commissioner, of the other  
18 options for high school completion and other available educational  
19 programs. For good cause shown, the commissioner may allow a  
20 person who is sixteen years of age to apply to take the examination,  
21 provided the commissioner may not issue a state high school diploma  
22 to such person until the person has attained seventeen years of age.

23 (b) Application to take or retake the examination described in  
24 subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section shall be accompanied  
25 by a money order or certified check in the nonrefundable amount of  
26 thirteen dollars. This amount shall include the fee for the state high  
27 school diploma.

28 (c) No veteran, member of the armed forces, as defined in section  
29 27-103, or any person under twenty-one years of age shall be required  
30 to pay the fees described in subsection (b) of this section. The  
31 commissioner may waive any fee described in subsection (b) upon the  
32 submission of evidence indicating an inability to pay.

33 (d) The Commissioner of Education shall keep a correct account of  
34 all money received under the provisions of this section and shall  
35 deposit with the State Treasurer all such money received by said  
36 commissioner. Funds paid to a local or regional board of education  
37 under this section shall be deposited in the school activity fund  
38 established under section 10-237 and expended to defray the costs of  
39 such testing and related administration and information.

40 (e) The commissioner shall establish criteria by which an "honors  
41 diploma" may be issued for exemplary performance on the  
42 examination.

43 (f) Not later than September 1, 2017, the State Board of Education  
44 shall establish criteria by which a local or regional board of education  
45 may affix the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy on a diploma  
46 awarded to a student who has achieved a high level of proficiency in  
47 English and one or more foreign languages. For purposes of this

48 subsection, "foreign language" means a world language other than  
49 English and includes American Sign Language and any other language  
50 spoken by a federally recognized Native American tribe.

51 Sec. 2. Section 10-221a of the general statutes is amended by adding  
52 subsection (k) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2017*):

53 (NEW) (k) Commencing with classes graduating in 2018, and for  
54 each graduating class thereafter, a local or regional board of education  
55 may affix the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy, as described in  
56 subsection (f) of section 10-5, as amended by this act, to a diploma  
57 awarded to a student who has achieved a high level of proficiency in  
58 English and one or more foreign languages, as defined in said  
59 subsection (f). The local or regional board of education shall include on  
60 such student's transcript a designation that the student received the  
61 Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2017</i>	10-5
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2017</i>	10-221a

**Statement of Purpose:**

To create the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy which is to be affixed to the high school diploma of those students who have achieved a high level of proficiency in English and one or more foreign languages.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*